DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 243 502 JC 840 172

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TITLE The Challenge of Faculty Development for Part-Timers in Noncampus Community Colleges.
PUB DATE 83
NOTE 19p.; Paper presented at the Conference on Quality in Off-Campus Credit Programs: Challenges, Choices and Concerns, sponsored by the Division of Continuing Education, Kansas State University (Atlanta, GA, October 31-November 2, 1983).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Viewpoints (120)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *College Faculty; Community Colleges; Faculty College Relationship; *Faculty Development; *Noncampus Colleges; *Part Time Faculty; Program Descriptions; Two Year Colleges
IDENTIFIERS *Vista College CA

ABSTRACT

A description is presented of Vista College's faculty development system, which attempts to provide an atmosphere of support for the part-time faculty who carry over 85% of the teaching assignments. First, the paper provides background on the characteristics of Vista College, a non-campus community college which offers over 400 courses in general education, occupational fields, and continuing education at more than 200 community locations. After discussing the problem of the affiliation of part-time faculty, the paper describes the college's faculty development project, which used a survey of Vista faculty's characteristics, and needs and preferences regarding faculty development in devising the development model. Then, the two major areas of the faculty development program are highlighted: (1) the generic components designed to reach all faculty, which include a faculty handbook, faculty newsletter, and an annual seminar on teaching and learning; and (2) the targeted components designed to meet individual needs, which include orientation for new faculty, peer faculty consultants, mini-seminars on teaching and learning, and curriculum/program area workshops. Finally, conclusions drawn from the project are presented, highlighting the success of the faculty consultation service in providing technical assistance, and the realization that the needs and participation level of part-time faculty and administrators will change over time. (HB)

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THE CHALLENGE OF FACULTY DEVELOPMENT FOR PART-TIMERS IN NONCAMPUS COMMUNITY COLLEGES

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Presented at the Quality in Off-Campus Credit Programs: Challenges, Choices, and Concerns Conference, sponsored by the Kansas State University, Division of Continuing Education, Manhattan, Kansas, held in Atlanta, Georgia, October 31 - November 2, 1983.

JC 840 172

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THE CHALLENGE OF FACULTY DEVELOPMENT FOR PART-TIMERS IN NONCAMPUS COMMUNITY COLLEGES

The title of this conference is "Quality in Off Campus Programs." To the reader, a logical assumption may be that "off campus programs are attached to "on campus" programs. This is indeed the case, most of the time. In most instances, colleges and universities have as their base a comprehensive academic program physically housed on a campus. Off campus instructional offerings have been added to supplement the on campus academic program, often to offer lifelong learning opportunities to a wider audience of adult learners. Such is not the case in a number of institutions which usually have a small administrative support facility with all, or almost all, courses offered at locations dispersed throughout a given geographical area. These institutions have become known as noncampus colleges. Vista College in Berkeley, California is one of nine community colleges organized in this manner. Others include Coastline, in Southern California, the Community College of Vermont, Watcomb in Washington State, and Maricopa in Phoenix.

Characteristics of Vista College.

Vista is an urban public community college in the multi-campus Peralta Community College District serving the East Bay cities of Alameda, Emeryville, Berkeley, Oakland, and Piedmont. Within a 64 square mile area, there are three campus based colleges (Alameda, Laney, and Merritt) and the noncampus college, Vista. Vista was established in 1974 with a mission to serve adult learners who had not been traditional consumers of post-secondary education and to counter the time and place barriers to learning. A goal was to deliver educational services to adult learners who do not attend the campus based colleges.

From inception, it was intended that almost all faculty employed by Vista would be part-timers. Part-timers allow the college maximum flexibility in designing course offerings to respond to the diverse educational needs of adults and the changing social and economic characteristics of the community. Their use also offers financial and administrative advantages to the district. More importantly, the college can make good use of the professional expertise of many individuals actively working in occupations paralleling instructional areas. As working professionals they are abreast of the state of the art in their fields, and well-versed in the realities of actual employment. They are a direct link to the community's economic and social structures. Approximately 350 part-timers are employed each semester at Vista, along with three full-time contract faculty and other full-timers on partial contract for a total of five FTE contract faculty.

Part-time faculty are responsible for over 85 percent of the teaching assignments. Over 400 classes are offered each semester in more than 200 community locations. Many classes are offered in partnership with the agency or business organization which supply Vista with rentfree classroom space. Courses are offered each semester in general education areas for transfer and personal enrichment, in occupational areas such as business, transportation, American Sign Language, gerontology, and energy technologies, and in continuing education for business and health care professional and paraprofessionals. A significant number of courses are offered by television. About 12,000 adult part-time students enroll at Vista during any one semester; the average age of students is 42.

The Problem of Affiliation of Part-time Faculty.

From the beginning, administrators were aware of the acute problems of staffing a college entirely with part-time faculty. The college was

established at a time when the need to attend to part-time faculty development was emerging. Faculty development became a major emphasis in higher education in the 1970's with early writers such as Bender (1972) and Williams (1972) calling attention to attend to affiliation needs of part-timers, calling them a "neglected species." Barbara Stardahl (1981), in an overview of the faculty development literature of this period provided a summary of 16 postulates for successful programs. Concurrently, other writers such as David Leslie (1978) were making observations about the growing percentages of part-time faculty in higher education and questioning the effects of hiring practices on quality of instruction.

Within this context, Vista administrators were committed to establish an atmosphere of support for the cadre of part-timers who were the majority faculty at the college -- not adjunct, or added on to a parent organization. The challenge was to create a systematic support system within the noncampus structure of the college. The purpose of this paper is to describe how a faculty development system has been strenghtened by a three year grant from the Fund for Instructional Improvement (FIPSE), U.S. Office of Education.

Background for the Faculty Development FIPSE Project.

Proceeding on the principles that assessment should form the basis of a successful program, and that faculty involvement in planning is essential for acceptance, 408 current or recent Vista faculty were surveyed in the spring of 1979, (Elioff, 1980). A 32-item instrument assessed individual backgrounds and experiences, feelings and observations about teaching in this kind of college, and perceptions about adult students. It also asked for opinions about faculty support and development activities, and invited the respondents

to rank the importance of various inservice topics. With substantial encouragement 299 faculty completed the questionnaire.

The survey indicated that faculty were very supportive of the college's overall goals and mission. Personal enjoyment and intellectual stimulation surpassed money and status as the major reasons for teaching. The groups were characterized in three segments: 1) trained teachers who, for personal or professional reasons, did not want to work full-time; 2) trained teachers who could not find full-time positions and had settled for teaching four or five classes, often at two or three different colleges; and 3) business and industrial practitioners who taught one or two classes to share what they know and do well in the nonacademic world. Because of the heterogeneity of the part-time faculty group, all are not interested in becoming full-time members of the academy; many prefer to juggle their academic and nonacademic responsibility because of the satisfactions they receive from each sphere of activity. However, it was recognized that the college employs talented liberal arts teachers who have not found a desired full-time position in today's shrinking higher education market.

The survey respondents liked what they were doing and were interested in ways of doing it better. A gratifying two-thirds of them felt it was reasonable to ask them to spend several hours per semester--with no compensation--on inservice activities. They were especially interested in student retention, adult learning theory, and instructional techniques. The preferred inservice strategies were, in order, a newsletter about teaching and learning, short seminars on specific instructional topics, and occasional large-group workshops focusing on a broad problem area or discussion topic.

Using the survey data and information on faculty development activities at three other noncampus community colleges, (Coastline, in California; Pioneer, in Missouri; and Rio Salado, in Arizona) Vista staff began faculty development activities with the overall objectives of increasing both the teaching effectiveness of faculty and their sense of affiliation with the college. The college already sponsored a fairly successful but somewhat unconcerted series of learning and social activities for faculty: orientation sessions at the beginning of each semester, annual one-day workshops for all faculty, several mini-workshops that focused on important teaching and learning issues, a general college newsletter that appeared irregularly, and minimal technical assistance to faculty from program administrators. These activities were the responsibility of several administrators rather than being coordinated by one person.

Evaluation of these initial activities and knowledge of faculty characteristics and their participation in activities, made it clear to administrators that a: 1) more comprehensive program was needed, 2) that supervision needed to be centralized, and 3) that faculty development activities needed to be a regular function in the organizational structure of the college.

The FIPSE Faculty Development Project.

Beginning in the Fall of 1980, a three year project was funded by FIPSE to assist the college in creation of a comprehensive faculty development model and to contribute to institutionalization of practice. The project was directed by an assistant dean of instruction with a staff assistant hired full-time for the first two years.

The project has assisted in development of a comprehensive model with two emphases, generic components which were designed to reach all faculty and targeted components designed to meet individual needs of faculty or administrators. The following chart provides an overview of the components which are described in detail below.

The Comprehensive Program

Generic Components	Targeted Components
Faculty Handbook	Orientation for new faculty
Faculty Newsletter	Peer faculty teaching and learning (TLCs')
Annual seminar on teaching and learning	Mini-seminars on teaching and learning
	Curriculum/program area workshops

Generic Components

Faculty Handbook. Research on faculty handbooks for part-timers indicated that most were the same as those written for full-time faculty. Content was primarily detailed administrative policy and procedures with little, if any information on teaching methods or adult learning. The Vista handbook is written in clear "nonbureaucratic" style and contains the basic information a part-timer needs to know to function effectively. The contents include complete and accurate information on college policies and procedures and a section on teaching and learning is included in the handbook. "Resources and Services" lists TLC services and information about the resource library. "Teaching Tips and Techniques" includes brief articles in areas

such as: defining instructional objectives, course outlines, tips for first class sessions, assessment techniques, using community classroom facilities, art with special students, a glossary of education terms, reprints of articles from the faculty journal, and several "Innovation Abstracts" from the National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development (NISOD). Ideas and techniques in these two sections are responses to questions about teaching that have surfaced in training sessions and individual meetings with part-timers.

Faculty Newsletter. Research on college newsletters or "house organs" indicated that most feature announcements of college-wide events and administrative and faculty activities, but contain little information about teaching and learning. Vista published a faculty newsletter, which faculty prefer to call a journal, titled TIE-LINE, which features information about teaching adult learners in the noncampus setting. The journal was edited for the first two years by the project staff assistant and by a part-time faculty member in the third year. Articles, many of which were solicited from the faculty, dealt directly with solutions for common teaching problems and ideas for the improvement of instruction.

Annual Seminar on Teaching and Learning. Each spring, a one-day seminar is held with a focus on improvement of teaching. It is organized as a professional activity as distinguished from an orientation about administrative matters. The seminar is held in a comfortable, nonacademic environment such as a hotel, University of California faculty club, or local senior center. Lunch is served. A guest speaker on an appropriate educational topic keynotes, with workshops provided on teaching and learning. About one-third of the faculty attend each year on a voluntary basis.

Targeted Components

Orientation for new Faculty. Each fall a two hour orientation meeting is held to help new faculty understand the philosophy and mission of the college and to introduce them to policies, procedures, and available support services. The faculty handbook provides written information to support the orientation. A slide-tape presentation about the college has been developed for use at the orientation. This slide-tape can be viewed by any faculty who miss the orientation, or for those who are hired to teach later in the semester.

Peer Faculty Consultants on Teaching and Learning (TLCs'). The use of peer Teaching and Learning Consultants (TLC's) to provide technical assistance to part-timers was a unique feature of the project. Peer mentoring occurs informally among full-time faculty in campus-based colleges, but the physical detachment of most part-timers from their colleges and colleagues makes peer mentoring very difficult. Prior to the FIPSE project, Vista's full-time program planners in various disciplines/occupational areas assisted faculty with instructional questions. However, these program planners often did not have the time nor the training necessary to be technical advisors.

Six TLCs' were selected by the project director, with the assistance of an informal advisory group that included the Dean of Instruction, and several assistant deans and program planners. These project advisors were asked to recommend part-timers who were: 1) good teachers, 2) competent in a special area (e.g., curriculum development, problem analysis, group process strategies, communication techniques, 3) representative of Vista's major instructional areas, and 4) able to function well in a facilitator/consultant role.

The six TLCs' selected represented a broad range of disciplines and professional skills, so that faculty in each of the college's major instructional areas could identify with a TLC who has had similar teaching experiences. They were all experienced community college teachers. Two were PH.D. psychologists, one of whom has extensive experience in teacher training. The others were a practicing artist, a foreign language PH.D. who trains and supervises teaching assistants at U. C. Berkeley, a biologist who has experience in designing individualized instruction and a business/management instructor with experience in corporate training.

During the first semester of the project, TLCs' received training for their role. They were introduced to the faculty in writing in the faculty journal, and in person at the spring faculty seminar. During the second semester, the TLCs' consulted individually with 17 faculty keeping detailed case histories. They participated in planning and conducting workshops at the spring seminar, and provided several targeted mini-seminars. TLCs' were involved in evaluation of the first year's activities.

Goals of the second year were to involve the TLCs' in more small group activities, rather than have them provide individual consultancies as their major activity. This shift in emphasis was suggested by first-year evaluation of how faculty had used TLC services. In retrospect, it was clear that this technical assistance component should have proceeded from general to individual use, giving faculty time to become acquainted with the TLCs'.

As TLCs' became known personally to faculty through seminars and group meetings, faculty felt more comfortable asking for assistance with a classroom

problem. Consequently, the second year focus was on matching each TLC informally with a program area and then having TLCs' organize mini-seminars for faculty in that program. This practice created a stronger link of TLCSs' to administrators in charge of programs. Administrators began to make direct referrals of faculty to TLCs' for help.

The small group sessions that the TLCs' organized with their program areas led to some individual consultancies as follow-up activities. The relationships initiated in the group meetings also often resulted in some faculty calling TLCs' several times a month for advice on immediate, short-term questions or problems (e.g., "What's a good activity for this lesson? What text should I use for ...? How do I drop or add students?").

Individual consultancies were diverse in scope and content. The time involved ranged from a half-hour telephone call to four meetings of an hour each. The general pattern of the individual consultancies was an initial contact, followed by a classroom observation, ending with a discussion of classroom techniques on the telephone or over coffee. Faculty objectives during the consultancies included learning more about: making slides and using them in classes; team teaching, which turned into a personal career counseling session; publicizing classes; grading policies and procedures; decreasing student attrition and increasing participation; teaching art to elders; developing a better relationship with staff at the community learning site, as well as figuring out transportation options for students; and motivating students.

Highlights of the third year were:

- formal assignment of the TLC to several related program areas
- addition of a TLC for faculty working with individualized instruction
- TLCs' worked more closely with assistant deans and program planners to identify inservice activities for the program area
- TLCs' continued with 5-10 phone calls each week to faculty in their program area
- TLCs' led mini-seminars and workshops for general faculty and workshop designed for specific program area faculty.

Mini-seminars on Teaching and Learning

Seminars are held throughout the year on topics requested by faculty or suggested by administrators. Seminar leaders are TLCs', other faculty, administrators, or guest lecturers. From six to eight seminars are held during the year. Examples of seminar topics are:

General Seminars

- Adult development and problems of teaching adults. A nine-hour workshop attended by 23 faculty who learned about adult development theory, matching goals and expectations of teachers and students, group process skills for working with adults and motivational strategies.
- Bi-weekly two-hour faculty support group led by a TLC psychologist which was held for a three month period. Organized as a drop-in session for faculty to discuss teaching problems, topics included student attrition, using small groups to increase student participation, assessing student outcomes, good beginnings for classes and teacher burn-out. Sessions were attended by 5-10 faculty each week.

- Publicity techniques, three hours, attended by nine faculty.
- Grading methods, two hours, attended by my faculty
- Using micro-computers, three hours, attended by 36 faculty

Curriculum/Program Area Workshops.

As the project progressed, it became evident that the best way to group faculty and conduct effective seminars was around specific program or discipline areas. While some faculty were interested in the general seminars listed above, most were more likely to respond to seminars directly related to the program in which they teach.

The following are examples of seminars which focused on curriculum development and/or standardization, diversifying teaching strategies beyond the lecture approach, and socializing among faculty:

- American Sign Language, 18 hours, attended by 20 faculty;
- foreign languages, including ESL, three hours, attended by 11 faculty;
- career planning, three hours, attended by five faculty;
- methods for teaching business skills, in individualized learning labs, four hours, attended by 12 faculty;
- older adult/gerontalogy program, 3 hours, attended by 25 faculty;
- travel program, 3 hours, attended by 10 faculty.

What Has Been Learned as a Result of the FIPSE Project

The project was highly successful in enabling the college to strengthen faculty support activities and institutionalize practices. The following selected observations may be of interest to others working in noncampus colleges which primarily employ part-timers, or to those who work in campus based colleges with large off-campus programs staffed by part-timers.

The comprehensive faculty development model seems to have the essential components needed to work successfully with large numbers of part-timers. These essentials are: 1) generic activities designed to reach all faculty; i.e., a concise, clearly written handbook which covers all that faculty need to know about how to function administratively and written suggestions about appropriate methods for teaching adult learners, a regular college-wide newsletter that includes information about teaching and learning, periodic college-wide gatherings for staff to address teaching and learning issues and build affiliation with the college; 2) targeted activities designed to meet specific needs, e.g., orientation for new faculty, seminars and workshops, curriculum/program area meetings; and 3) consultation service available to provide technical assistance to faculty.

The most unique feature of the project was the consultancy component. This component was developed because part-timers work in isolation in community based settings with little or no peer contact. A major insight gained from our experience is that part-timers are more open to use of consultants than was expected. It was anticipated, based on research of consultant use in four year institutions, that faculty would be reticent about inviting peers into their classrooms. It was found that the part-timers see availability of a consultant as a developmental rather than remedial service.

Faculty perception of peer consultants as service provider seemed to be influenced by several factors. It was important that consultants were carefully introduced as peers with specific services to offer, rather than critics. The key factor however, seems to be that the majority of the faculty are employed in occupations other than teaching. Their self definition is their primary work role

(attorney, accountant, psychologist, artist, writer, etc.). Teaching what they know is exciting to them, but they may realize their inexperience in organizing their classes and in methods of presentation. Having a strong sense of self, high motivation and interest, these part-time teaching professionals are more likely to see consultants as a technical assistance service as compared to full-time faculty whose primary role is teaching. In other words, use of consultants seems less threatening to part-timers.

It was thought, based on knowledge of peer consultants use in four-year institutions, that: consultants should be slowly and carefully introduced to faculty; that consultants should work first with individual faculty and then try to link them with groups; that anonymity regarding faculty use of consultants was important; and that the role of consultants should not be associated with administrative evaluation of teaching for purposes of rehiring. It held true that the consultants' role needs to be clearly separated from evaluation. However, we learned that it is more effective to connect consultants initially to groups of faculty in specific discipline/program areas rather than introducing them to the entire faculty as a resource to them as individuals.

Because of the noncampus structure, there is little opportunity to build the networks of faculty that exist in traditional college departments. It was found that it is important to create networks of faculty in discipline or program areas such as foreign languages, business, American sign language and connect the program administrator and a TLC to the network. In program area activities the consultant is introduced as a participant and technical assistant for the program area. The consultant then becomes the resource faculty person for the group. Faculty with similar teaching problems can be linked and consultants can work with small groups or with individuals. Faculty who have received help from consultants

are more likely to tell others in their group about availability of technical assistance. In addition, consultants are more likely to have faculty directly referred to them by the administrator in charge of the discipline area.

While some elements of anonymity were important to preserve, we found that faculty were quite open about their use of consultants. Faculty talked about how TLCs' had been helpful and recommended their experience with TLCs' to others. The consultants were careful to preserve anonymity of faculty who asked for help with personal problems and with expressions of insecurity in their role as teachers. Despite the relative disinterest in anonymity, all case reports and descriptions of consultants were identified by numbers known only by the consultants.

It was found in this project, and as reported by other projects using faculty consultants, that a side benefit is what consultants gain from the experience. They receive training and consultancy experience and have the opportunity to share their learning with each other in a very special environment for intellectual growth.

The project confirmed the necessity to have faculty develoment under the direction of one person. It is clear that unless one person has the responsibility to see that all components of a program are carried out, important parts of the program will not be implemented. In noncampus institutions, day-to-day management is intense, with diverse tasks being carried out simultaneously. The nature of noncampus colleges requires administrators to react to many outside influences which require constant regrouping of priorities and changes in the delivery of instruction. Faculty support services must be seen as a constant to be attended to within this active institutional environment. Faculty support services will not be provided systematically unless one person coordinates the program.

Another observation is that faculty development activities must be viewed as evolutionary. That is, as part-timers are associated with the college over time, their needs and participation level will change and needs of administration will also change. The program must be sensitive to characteristics of the part-time cohort. Experience indicates that new part-timers are enthusiastic and are most likely to participate in general activities. Experienced part-timers are more likely to want to confine their involvement to specific program group activities. In addition, program/discipline groups have their own personality which dictates how faculty development can be effective. For example, faculty in the performing visual arts desire frequent contact with each other to share teaching success and their own creative efforts and products. The human services faculty (psychologists, social workers, and health professionals) are people oriented. They wish to meet often to share teaching methods and socialize. The business professionals prefer one or two meetings per year dealing specifically with their program area. They operate more as individuals and desire less contact with each other and are not interested in socialization. They behave more as consultants hired to do a job in much the same way as they would perform a job in business or industry. They want well directed, organized, efficient faculty support services.

In conclusion, the Vista Faculty Development Program has been greatly enhanced by infusion of resources provided by the FIPSE project. The college will continue to be committed to providing activities to strengthen affiliation of part-time faculty and will be searching for ways to continue to change and improve services. This paper cannot begin to address all of the facets of this topic. Readers are encouraged to call or write the college for additional information.

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